POLITICS

Every so often the worker is invited to the polling places to elect a government for the term to follow. At such times he is an important person — the salt of the earth, the backbone of the nation, the mainstay of civilization. With the compliments of this or that political party his baby is kissed, his hand is shaken, his back is slapped, his ego is catered to and the floodgates of oratory are opened to deluge him with emotion-packed words arranged to suggest that they mean something. Whatever his wishes may be — from the distant moon to the lowly carrot — they shall be granted.

It is a beautiful and inspiring sight. Men of stated worth, whose talents and virtues are repeatedly affirmed in all the important journals, imploring that the worker deliver his vote to them. Billboard signs, newspaper advertisements, radio and television programs, garden parties, mass rallies, volumes of verbiage, all designed to ensure that he does the right thing.

And he does.

Then comes the morning after. The signs are taken down. There is room in the important journals for more sporting news. The candidates congratulate each other. The oratory is ended. The babies are unkissed except by their mothers. The moon fades with the dawn, but still hangs high. The carrots remain in the stalls. And the worker turns up on the job at the usual time to continue the business of working for wages.

All is normal again and one of the contending political parties has received a mandate from the electorate to keep it that way.

That's how it goes. Lower income taxes become a substitute for higher wages. Increased old age pensions struggle to keep up with higher prices. A national health plan takes the place of local and company plans. Measures of little merit replace measures of little merit.

It doesn't matter what condition the world is in. There may be a boom, a depression, or a war. There may be masses of people overworked, underfed, or dying violently. There is no shortage of politicians, amply provided with funds, preying on the gullibility of the populace by insisting that there is nothing wrong with society that cannot be cured by a little patchwork here and there. They may make their appeals to "the People," or to "Labor." They may in some cases believe the things they say and they may if elected bring into effect some of their promises. But however impressive and down to earth their efforts may seem, they never succeed in making the existing system of society fit to live in except to the parasite class and their principal protectors and bootlickers.

The game of politics, for all the sham, the vaudeville, the bombast, the empty promises so often associated with it, is a serious game. Vast sums of money are poured into it and these sums are not provided by the workers. The workers are not usually well supplied with spare cash and they are not in any case very much interested in politics. Their interest is limited mainly to giving ear to the commotion created at election time and deciding in favor of the candidates they think have given the best performance. The vast sums of money that are used to din from all directions the superiority of certain programs, policies and candidates are provided by the property-owning class, the capitalist class, and they are not provided because of any thought that in this way the interests of society may best be served; they are provided in the expectation that only their own interests will be served, even though these come into serious conflict with the interests of society.

The capitalists have special material interests that cause them to have differences among themselves and these differences result in the existence of two or more political parties in most countries. But in one thing above all others they are united and that is in their support of parties that stand first of all for the continued existence of capitalism. They are prepared to sanction a generous outlay of attractive promises and political horseplay for the approval of the workers, since it is necessary that this approval be obtained, but whatever the politicians do to get themselves elected they cannot hope to retain the support of the capitalists if they allow the suggestion to enter into their activities that capitalism is not the best of all possible systems of society. Needless to say, they are careful to protect their sources of campaign funds.

From all this it must be clear that the capitalists are far more aware of the importance of political action than are the workers. They sponsor and finance vast campaigns to ensure that governments are formed that will protect their privileged position. So great is their interest that in all modern nations they control not only the government but also the greater part of the opposition. This leaves the workers with little of prominence to choose from other than the various parties which, with slight differences dictated by sectional capitalist interests, all represent the capitalist class. But there is an alternative. It is not necessary for the workers to continue supporting parties that represent interests opposed to their own. They can when they choose look beyond the noise and deceit that draw their attention at present. It will require some interest in politics. It will require some thought and study — far more than is now shown. But every moment of it will be worth the effort, for it leads unerringly toward a system of society that will rid mankind at once and for all time of the terrors and uncertainties that are so much a part of working class life under capitalism.

Socialism is the alternative. Its introduction means a change that will make the world a fit place for humans to live in. Most people today oppose Socialism because they do not understand it and are influenced by the sneers and misrepresentations instigated by the beneficiaries of present society. Study and knowledge will change that attitude and will teach the workers that capitalism is not worthy of support no matter what party speaks in its name; that for them only Socialism is worthy of support and Socialism is represented only by the Socialist Party.

SOCIALIST PARTY OF CANADA

AN ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The most satisfying of all experiences is to meet people who hold the same views as you do. The feeling is magnified when the ideas are Socialist and the people who hold them are 6,000 miles away from your home.

It has been the privilege of the present writer to have travelled from London to America engaging in a propaganda tour organized by the World Socialist Party and the Socialist Party of Canada. Meetings were held in Boston, New York, Los Angeles and Santa Monica, California. In Canada meetings were held in Vancouver, Victoria and Winnipeg. Members and sympathizers alike combined to make this tour a success and it is to those these few sentences are addressed.

The hospitality shown me everywhere I went revealed the true nature of Socialist "Cameraderie." The numerous little socials and "get-togethers" where discussions took place in a convivial atmosphere were most enjoyable.

Through the energy and persistence of some members and sympathizers we managed to get on a TV programme in Los Angeles and a CBC radio programme in Vancouver. A little history is made thereby and our enthusiasms strengthened.

I'm expressing my thanks and in saying au revoir to my many new friends, it is with the natural regret that my visit could not have been longer. As it is, it has reaffirmed my view that propaganda for Socialism is the most gratifying and useful thing one can do.

J. D'ARCY (S.P.G.B.)